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C O N F I D E N T I A L KIEV 001158

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: UKRAINE: TARASYUK AND TYMOSHENKO REP REPORT NO
COALITION AGREEMENT REACHED - YET

Classified By: Ambassador. Reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) Tymoshenko adviser Hryhoriy Nemyrya denied to Ambassador and DCM March 24 that any agreement had been reached among Our Ukraine, Tymoshenko's eponymous bloc BYuT, and Socialists, although he acknowledged that talks were taking place between Tymoshenko's Deputy Oleksandr Turchynov and Our Ukraine's Roman Bezmertry and Roman Zvarych. In his characteristically precise manner, Nemyrya said that while talks were going on, &the depth of the communication is not bringing the sides closer to agreement.⁸ Both sides saw the talks as an &exhibit of good will,⁸ but both sides were looking to see &who has the stronger hand⁸ after the election. Nemyrya said that no side wanted to sign until the voting was over. Then they would know their relative electoral strength and would negotiate &from a position of strength.⁸ To underscore BYuT's pre-election caution on the talks, he pointed to remarks by Our Ukraine leader Mykola Martynenko, who was quoted in the March 24 &Financial Times⁸ implying that Our Ukraine might look to an alliance with opposition leader Viktor Yanukovych's Party of Regions &if the talks with Yulia are blocked.⁸

¶2. (C) Nemyrya said that President Yushchenko's comments during an interview on the national &1 18 channel March 23 were somewhat heartening. When asked about possible partners in a post-election Rada coalition, Yushchenko initially said he did not want to appear to be engaging in partisan politics. He then said, according to Nemyrya, that a coalition could be built around democratic forces, including PORA-PRP, Kostenko-Plyushch bloc. Nemyrya said that Yushchenko added, perhaps as an afterthought, &and BYuT.⁸ Nemyrya shared a March 19 IIS poll that put Regions at 36% with a slight upward trend, Our Ukraine roughly at 18% (with a slight downward trend), and BYuT at 18% with a slight upward trend. He said that BYuT had not commissioned the IIS poll.

¶3. (C) Ambassador spoke separately with Foreign Minister (and leader of Our Ukraine bloc member Rukh Party) Tarasyuk, who said he thought the agreement would be signed Thursday night, March 23. But then Tymoshenko said she wanted to wait to sign until Sunday night, March 26, at or after 2200 hours, that is, after the polls close.

Herbst